THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) Guidelines have been issued advising the CPSEs to invest 60% of the surplus fund in public sector banks.

(b) Government has decided to terminate the purchase preference policy in respect of product and services of CPSEs *w.e.f.* 31st March, 2008. Preferential policy for specific sector as per requirement may, however, be evolved/reviewed independently by the concerned Ministry/Department.

(c) As per the Public Enterprises Survey 2006-07, which is a public document, the aggregate cash and bank balances of all CPSEs taken together is rupees two lakhs three thousand two hundred sixty crore (Rs. 203260 crore) as on 31st March, 2007. The returns on the deposits made in the private and public sector banks depend upon the rate of interest offered by these banks. The return on debt instrument depends upon the yield available on debt instrument.

Salary dues of CPSU employees

4246. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether many of the Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) have not released the statutory dues of salaries of their employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken for early release of these dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) to (c) CPSEs are expected to pay the wages, salaries and statutory dues to their employees regularly out of their own resources. Government provides financial assistance by way of non-plan loans to certain CPSEs to supplement their efforts for payment of wages and salaries and statutory dues when they are unable to generate required resources. As per information available, Government sanctioned Rs. 2481.21 crore during the last four financial years for payment of wages, salaries and statutory dues to sick and loss making CPSEs.

Monitoring of ONGC's drilling operations

4247. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the replies of Unstarred Qeustions 2434 and 2439 given on 15th April 2008 in Rajya Sabha and to state:

(a) the comments of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on the performance of ONGC;

(b) whetehr ONGC failed to monitor the drilling operations; and

(c) what corrective measures have been taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Highlights of observations of the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) on an audit titled "Deep Water Exploration" relating to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) are placed in the Statement (*See* below).